

Czechs and Germans shaping the regional milieu: The case of growing regional cooperation influenced by the Europeanization of mutual relations

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講演者のヴァーツラフ・ホウジヴィチカ氏は、チェコ科学アカデミー社会学研究所のボーダーランド研究部門の主任研究員です。ホウジビチカ氏は越境地域協力研究の専門家であり、また歴史的な対立を抱えるチェコ人とドイツ人の「和解宣言」（1997 年）の策定にチェコ側の委員として関わってきました。チェコ人とドイツ人が歴史的な対立を乗り越える決意表明でもあった「和解宣言」策定までのプロセスは、同じように歴史的な対立を抱える日本と東アジア諸国との関係を考えるうえで、示唆に富むものでした。（高橋和、法経政策学科）

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends,

I would like to express my warm thanks for your kind invitation to Japan, very nice country still rather exotic in the eyes of Europeans, although we know your culture (let me for instance remind movies of Akiro Kurosawa), famous brands like Mitsubishi, Toyota, Olympus, Cannon, excellent electronics etc. To meet you personally is quite new experience.

Three pictures of the Mountain Fuji and the charming Japanese landscape brought from the port of Yokohama by my grandfather in 1919 (then he was soldier of the Czechoslovak Legions) reminds me historical roots of our relations.

Please, accept my warm thanks for kind invitation from The Association for the Northeast Asia Regional Studies, University of Yamagata and personally Dear Prof. Kazu Takahashi who originated our exceptional meeting.

**Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic Research
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Short introduction of the research programme

Today, Czech Border Regions is a research department with a programme that focuses on the assessment of the progressive changes that may be observed in the attitudes the Czech population maintains towards Germans and Germany and on an examination of the current state and potential development of cross-border co-operation between the Czech Republic and Germany.

On the basis of qualified analyses, thematically conceived empirical studies, and other materials, the department studies different forms of cross-border co-operation and the possibilities for their further development and application. Also studied are issues that relate to the formation of the social structure in the border regions as a result of changes induced by the transformation and diffusion effects.

In this connection the research looks at questions of national and regional identity and studies the mentality of the population that lives in the border regions. Research on internal factors in the foreign policy of the Czech Republic is aimed at a systematic and long-term observation of the specific attitudes the population in the border regions maintains towards Germany (including the historical dimension of mutual relationships) and the role this has in the process of the Czech Republic's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures and the European Union.

From diversity to complexity-response to the Challenge

Why CBC spread all over the Europe? The reason of the phenomenon is the response to the globalization and the globalization generate the Europeanization

The process of international networking brings possible tensions between the processes of globalisation and the national power to decide on economic matters. States and Multinational Corporations can have different goals may collide on practical and political matters. National states need to co-operate or will lose out with regards to economic performance, with corresponding economic and social costs (Lambooy: 1986).

Barriers of Cross-Border Cooperation

The enlarged EU consists of heterogeneous members (for instance Germany and the Czech Republic). Although there is common ground of political and cultural values, still every member state has its own institutional, cultural and political heritage that influences its political position and opinion. Especially it's true after the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007, when 12 new states (10 of them with the communist past) entered the European Union and the EU has to invest a lot of resources to moderate and overcome political differences.

Rejection of a European constitution in 2005 by the citizens of France and the Netherlands showed lack of communication between the European institutions/politicians and the European citizenry led to a reflection phase. New approaches and methods have to be explored and tested and common participative culture has to be established. A key issue in this context is show **different actors** can become part of **the democratic decision making**. Public affairs are no longer an exclusive sphere of activity for the administration and elected representatives. Politics on the local and regional levels increasing include the citizens and organizations from the third sector in the political decision making.

Globalisation as New form of geopolitics?

- Differently from economic functions, political functions are fundamentally rooted in territory.
- Networks of international market relations transgress the national boundaries in an „economic space“.
- Nation-states don't have a direct influence on the economic performance of its systems.
- Influence of cultural and institutional factors indirectly via the qualities of labour and entrepreneurs (Porter: 1990).

Bi-lateral relationships are likely to be crucial to the successful expansion of the EU and CBC could become the means of building trust between bordering countries, as it meshes the formal (EU-led initiatives) with the multiplication of informal, socio-economic and cultural interaction. The need for building trust between neighbours is essential, both between countries which share a border with the frontiers of the EU and,

perhaps more importantly, between former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Central Europe.

The Map of the EU changed once again on May 1, 2004, when the EU accepted ten new members. Let's look at how citizens of the four newly accepted members are satisfied with the situation after nearly a year after being incorporated in the Union.

In Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic the clear majority of citizens agree with their membership in the EU. Though the lowest proportion of affirmative statements can be found in the Czech Republic and in Hungary. In spite of the fact that the ratio of the citizens who do not agree with the membership in the EU in both these countries, reaches nearly three quarters of respondents.

Regional, structural and cohesion policy belongs to the primary competencies of the European Commission and the Member States of the EU as well.

The analysis of multi-level governanceⁱ seems a fruitful approach to the formal levels of European integration, one which perhaps come closer to some aspects of CBC by shedding considerable light on the role of subnational actors and regional elites in the process of inter-state bargaining. Actors involved in CBC and its implementation, for example, range from the European Commission right down to local civic elites. The increasing importance of CBC has in turn led to increasing autonomy for regional and local governments, who co-operate in subnational, transboundary projects, effectively managing parts of foreign policy at the local level (Scholte: 1993, Grix/Houžvička: 2000).

The many different forms of cross-border co-operation, cutting across the economic, cultural and social spheres of life, which have increased greatly since the collapse of communist rule and the opening of the borders to Central European states, contribute immensely to accelerating these state's 'pre-integration' into *the wider supranational framework of the EU*. Flows of people (travel), communications, commerce (trade), culture and ideas across-borders have proliferated in recent years.ⁱⁱ

Informal integration is thus ***a matter of flows and exchanges, of the gradual growth of networks of interaction*** (Wallace, 1990).

Challenge of globalisation on macrolevel

- Dilemma of interstate regionalism: countries and regions need to be competitive, but at the same time have to set free economic forces that may weaken their political power.

- Possible way out: regions and countries can be conceived as learning systems, in which an institutionalised configuration and inter-firm network relations develop.
- The dynamics of the transition of the new member state of the EU (including the Czech Republic) depicts in what extent the process of learning is successful after change of values.
- Still exists some limits/path dependencies: foremost the old institutions and social factor/consciousness lagging behind the reform programm.

The complexity of CBC flows is also to be found in the relationship between the factors making up the wider formal and informal integration processes of the EU of which CBC is part. A useful distinction between formal and informal integration can be found

The EU cohesion policy is based not on providing income support but consists mainly of providing grants and credits from the regional and structural funds and the European Investment Bank, mostly for infrastructure investment. The basic idea is to raise the productivity in a region in order to support local or attract foreign investment of neighbouring states. Ideally, public policies strengthen and flank favourable market between public institutions (universities, research institutes etc.) and private enterprises in order to achieve competitiveness. The results of that approach have been mixed.

With regard to cross-border (CBC) regional co-operation, EU initiatives appeared in the Association Agreements, among others with the former Czechoslovakia signed in October 1990. There were settled down specific provisions for regional co-operation by calling on the parties to strengthen mutual co-operation for regional development and spatially land planning.

German border areas after 1989 started by the opening of the frontier between the two former enemy countries. The frontier ceased to act as an impermeable political barrier, however, the boundaries also kept their dual role in the new situation. They serve as reference framework of the system formed by its environment as an instrument of creating relations to the neighbouring state. The process reached its peak at the end of **2007 when the Czech Republic joined the Schengen system.**

Boundaries not only separate, they also link (Luhmann 1982). **Euroregions established**

along the Czech-German border help generate social capital, among others trust, creating *conditio sine qua non* dynamic development of local communities as direct consequence of European integration on both local and regional levels. Dynamism of cross-border linking is apparently limited by three factors: language, mentalities and economic disparity/asymmetry.

Challenge of globalisation on microlevel

- Creating a stock of social capital on local level with circular relationship: Interaction/Participation — Trust — Access/influence — Social Capitals/Networks.
- Regional, structural and cohesion policy belongs to the primary competencies of the European Commission and the Member States of the EU as well.
- Cross-border co-operation leads to trust generation — the first stages of social capital mobilisation.

Regional cooperation and CBC efforts, as well as decentralization initiatives are equally affected by ongoing domestic, European and international trends. The domestic processes of nation building, **economic transformation and democratization are as much contextual factors as the European Union and globalization** (Kirchner 1998).

Difficulties in regional cooperation - Tensions within the European Union - Barriers of Cross-Border Cooperation.

Although the EU started different activities to improve the communication with the citizens and to sharpen the EU's profile, still many citizens have the impression that cannot influence European policies and do not feel connected to their European representatives. New forms of participation on the European level have to be considered to overcome this problem.

By many votes [Ágh, 2006] the EU has reached its limits in many respects which generated EU identity crisis that appears in forms as follows:

1. Westernized Europe has reached its geographical limits with Eastern enlargement the rest of Europe is beyond the “limes”;
2. solidarity has reached its limits due to “support fatigue” in the net contributor states;

3. policy integration has reached its limits and the first period of the Lisbon strategy has been a failure;
4. “elite Europe” has reached its limits as people no longer follow them;
5. the reform capacity of the big founding states, Germany and France, has reached its internal limits and the EU must wait patiently while they deal with their domestic problems.

An aim formulated in 2000 into Lisbon Strategy, to make the EU into “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world” by 2010. Decisive in this respect is when and how member states will be able to find way out of contemporary problems with the Lisbon Strategy.

The European Union requires a reform its Treaties. That’s why on October 29, 2004 the Heads of State and Government signed “the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe” in Rome. Although the ratification process was supposed to have been completed by the end of 2006, the process is still under way. “No” response in referenda in France, the Netherlands and the Republic of Ireland has plunged the EU crisis. Its roots are not only in mechanism and institutional frame however mainly in **lack of democracy, growing gap between the integration elites/politicians and ordinary people. The European Constitutional treaty** is long, complicated and incomprehensible to average readers. This became painfully apparent in France where hardly anyone read 480 page document despite the fact that the Constitution was mailed directly to 42 million voters (Weidenfeld: 2007).¹

The European Constitution marks the starting point for renewal debate about Europe, the start of re-thinking what are the roots and aims of European integration. There is a **danger for Europe**, in the transition from the US-dominated western world order to multipolar power constellation, with China and India as new world powers, **will be marginalized**. On the other side, the transformation also offers opportunities for Europe to become an influential global-governance actor in international politics.

The European Union has globally been ascribed the mostly positive role of an international negotiating or civil power, which stands for the development of a fair multilateralism. The EU contributed substantially to the largely peaceful transformation process in the former socialist countries. In this context the EU has made major political and financial investments in Europe’s stability and security.

¹ [Messner, 2007].

Despite of current stalemate situation within the reforming process the EU is both the most advanced and at the same time the most ambitious project of regional cooperation in the world and in principle an appropriate answer to the challenges to the globalization, which is increasingly giving rise to transnational sets of problems and necessitating cross-border governance [Messner, 2007].

Connection of foreign and domestic policy of the state

If the thesis on the close **connection of foreign and domestic policy** of the state applies, then the Czech-German relationship is a model situation, moreover characterized especially on the Czech side by **the tendency to react emotionally** (especially towards some opinions and initiatives of organizations of ethnic German expellees). All of the continuities in the factors which influence foreign policy, historical memory is probably the least constant (Paterson 1996).

The modern **history of conflicts** between Czechs and Germans, as well as some of the periods of **productive cooperation** between the two countries, must be studied in the inter-related context of the Central European space, so that **historical memory** contributes to bringing the countries closer together and to improving the mutual understanding of two neighbouring nations, as the risk of recollection not coped with is that there remains the potential for the recurring evocation of former conflicts.

Historical memory and distinct ethnic identity continue to play the role of risk factors in Czech-German relations and the study of these phenomena warrants corresponding attention. It is ultimately difficult for the partner on the other side to understand and anticipate his neighbour's problems and the steps that could lead to solving them. Rarely does it occur that such problems are approached and dealt with in a complexly, in a broader, supra-national context. This fact must be viewed as a call to intensify the level of knowledge and understanding relating to the differences in the historical memory of the two neighbouring countries and to extend the degree to which each side is knowledgeable about the other, as deficits in this regard tend to encourage the development of *disparities* rather than similarities.

Clearly it is much easier to overcome gaps in factual knowledge (language skills, educational curricula and textbooks, etc.) than it is socio-psychological barriers of an emotional tenor (a sense of the "otherness" in one's neighbour) that are lodged in the

deeper layers of the attitudes and opinions of people. It is the deep roots behind these attitudes that historical memory relates to.

The end of the Cold War and the subsequent bipolar arrangement of Europe also predestined, to a certain extent, “the return of Central European history”, namely those recent trends or stages emanating from the post-war division of Germany, and the eviction (transfer of population) of groups of ethnic Germans. This necessitated drastic intervention in the strongly diverse and complex environment of the Continental Centre, whose ethnic composition had evolved over centuries. As a result of the rapid disintegration of the Allied coalition and the subsequent East-West conflict (the Cold War), these historical changes were either not reflected at all, or only partially, or in a strongly ideological form. Ultimate task of the new era was contemporary reflection on the post-war migration of German-speaking inhabitants from the countries of Central European Countries, as part of the German Question. An understanding of the development after 1945 requires knowledge of the historical development, which ethnic Germans “created” outside Germany.

After the reunification of Germany in 1990, European policy was repeatedly confronted with the phenomenon of the “German Question”, which had dominated it throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It was associated, among other things, with the fact that until the formation of the German “Reich” in 1871, Germans have never lived in one state. This question represents a problem in itself, but it also predetermines, in combination with a series of other factors of an external and internal character, the outburst of two world wars, which caused enormous suffering to all inhabitants of the European Continent and other parts of the world. Whether introduced in connection with security, integration or diversity, the German Question and its roots are always based on unresolved problems concerning the relationships between the nation and the territory.

East Central Europe And Falling of the Iron Curtain - Dreams came True? General situation within Central and Eastern Europe after the Fall of the Berlin Wall-Basic frame of the regional cooperation

Yet the acknowledge prevails that central Europe exists there is no agreement about where it precisely ends and starts. While the coordinates of world politics are shifting away from Europe, central Europe remains politically important because it evokes

powerful memories of some of the major disasters of the twentieth century: Nazism, two world wars, and the holocaust. Furthermore, Central Europe was the staging area of the Cold War and the most likely flashpoint where that war might have turned out (Markowitz, Reich: 1997).

Falling down of the Iron curtain deeply reshaped the circumstances of Central Europe and expectations connected with the end of the Cold War in the area.

Every nation, including Czechs and Germans and most probably Japanese, is “condemned” by the past to perpetually re-affirm itself, to search for its own identity, and is continuously forced to confront the past in the changing conditions and circumstances of its existence [Hovel 1990; Havelka 2001; Křen 1992].

Otherness is thus a part of identity every nation community.

The modern history of conflicts between Czechs and Germans, as well as some of the periods of productive cooperation between the two countries, must be studied in the inter—related context of the Central European space, so that historical memory contributes to bringing the countries closer together and to improving the mutual understanding of two neighbouring nations, as the risk of recollection not coped with is that there remains the potential for the recurring evocation of former conflicts. This is where we see the social mission of our research.

When the Czech Republic became a member of the EU, Czech-German relations took on a new and different dimension. For the first time in history both countries are members of a single European community promoting democracy. Both countries are also members of the NATO.

The relations between the two countries today are substantially affected by the process of Europeanization, which in the border regions involves processes of social integration and networking that is aimed in the long term at the formation of cross-border community.

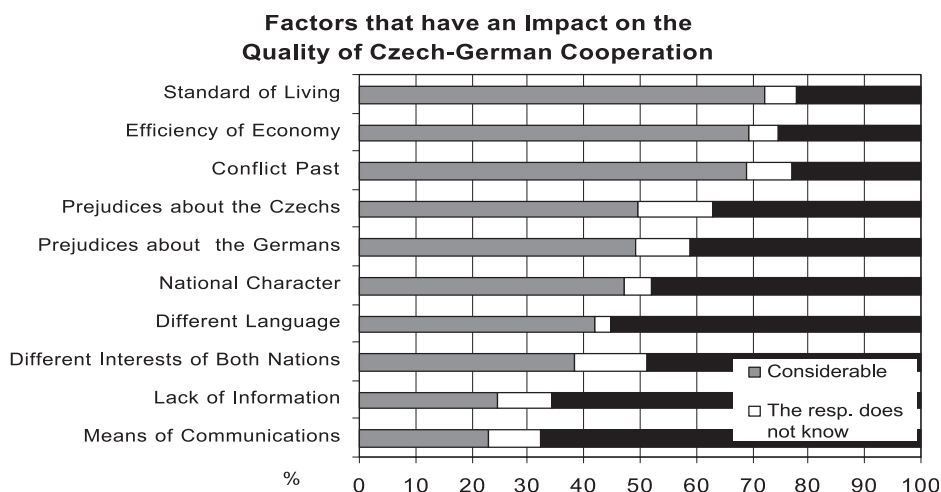
The processes of European integration, in which the Czech Republic itself is also a participant, are based on the assumption that many of the problems inherited from past — often very tragic — events, which affected relations between European states and the populations of Europe, can be overcome. The waning effects of these tragic events from the past century continue to have an impact, to a greater or lesser indirect extent, on the current state of Czech-German relations.

Basic political agreements exist between the Czech Republic and Germany, and there

is a shared declared interest in the development of cooperation, which includes support from Germany for ethnic Germans living in the Czech Republic. With the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union relations between the two states eased significantly and are now cooperative in nature. But the factor of historical consciousness (the demise of an independent Czechoslovak Republic, the Nazi occupation, the transfer of the German-speaking population out of the country at the end of the war) remains a latent presence (primarily in the form of the so-called Sudeten Germans Issue) with influence beyond just the bilateral relations of these two countries. *The factors which influence foreign policy, historical memory is probably the least constant* (Paterson: 1996).

Before entering the EU the Czech-German relation were characterised by an enormous intensity of direct contacts. But typical of this relationship is an asymmetry between the intensity of practical cooperation and the achieved political and social proximity. On the axis between dependence on the one side and a **close partnership** (*Michigander*) on the other side, this relationship can be designated as that of a **cooperative neighbourhood** (*Nebeneinander*). Germany cannot be “walked over” either in the Central Europe or in the EU.

It is within multilateral organisations that Germany’s national power becomes more effective and can be legitimised easier. Multilateralism and European integration enlarges Germany’s elbow —room as a national state in international politics (Nijhus: 1998). Germany has become a team player by conviction: its population has internalized multilateralism, not for reasons of altruism but for the sake of efficient foreign and security policy in an interdependence world (Hyde-Price: 2000). Nevertheless continuation of the endless debate on the new German foreign policy comprehends debate on German cope with history/*Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and German national identity. That’s why, by my opinion, was opened so intensively after the Fall of Iron Curtain topic of historical memory within the bilateral relations of Germany with the Czech Republic and Poland.



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Historical Background

In the period before the First World War ethnic Germans (with the exception of Russia, where they always used to find themselves in the minority position), were in a dominant position not only in Germany, but also in the whole Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. This status was radically changed by the new international arrangement defined by the Versailles Treaty system (1919, signed also by the Empire of Japan), which brought about radical changes in Central Europe, namely in its political geography. Including the newly established Republic of Czechoslovakia, all new democracies relied on the support of the victorious powers of the Entente which guaranteed their existence and maneuvering space in their interest of restraining Germany and the USSR.

Germans in the pre-war Czechoslovakia

The defeat of the Central Powers in World War I brought fundamental changes as the Austro-Hungarian Empire broke up, Germany was badly weakened and Russia suffered great losses. Several new state formations emerged in Central Europe, and each of them had numerous German speaking minorities that were deprived of their original status as members of the ruling nation. The largest of all were groups of ethnic Germans in Czechoslovakia (3.7 mil.) and Romania (nearly one million).

A series of decisions made immediately after the First World War solved some aspects of the German Question, but ignored and created some others, at the centre of

which were namely groups of ethnic Germans. Soon afterwards it was evident that revisionist politicians in Germany had found arguments that helped them get support, at first in the domestic environment, but later also on an international scale, including destruction of the Czechoslovak Republic in the autumn 1938.

The Czechoslovakia after the Munich Agreement 1938

The German national minorities' agitation for their ever-increasing demands of belonging to Germany became the tools for the Nazi expansion into Central and Eastern Europe during the thirties of the 20th century. A. Hitler used the K. Henlein's Sudeten German Party, at that time representing the majority of all Germans in Czechoslovakia, to stir up national tension to boiling point and thus create a pretext for a German diplomatic and military intervention. After massive pressure from Western Powers² accepted President E. Benes at 30th September 1938 conditions of the Munich Agreement that started liquidation of the CSR.

The border territories (then Sudetenland) which Germany compelled the Czechoslovak Republic to surrender and to the cession of which was not concerned about re-adjusting the boundaries of the German nation state by seizing the Borderland/then Sudeten German territories, but about hegemony in Europe. Hitler intended to incorporate Czechoslovakia in the German sphere of influence as a military glacis, as an arms producer and reservoir of labour. In the Czech lands, the German occupation authorities followed the racist concept of the Germanization of the country. The Czechs were to be destroyed as an independent nation.³ The same model of drastic ethnic conflict resolution was applied towards the Jews.

The situation in Central Europe only changed after the defeat of Germany in the Second World War. Germany lost extensive territories in the East of Central Europe and these losses were accompanied by the escape and forceful expulsion of German speaking population (so-called ethnic Germans).

Period of Expulsions

² N. Chamberlain sent in September 30, 1938 instruction to his Ambassador B. Newton: "You should at once see President (E. Beneš) and on behalf of His Majesty's Government urge acceptance of plan that has been worked out today after prolonged discussion (with A. Hitler) with a view of avoiding conflict. You will appreciate that there is no time for argument it must be plain acceptance."

³ Czech-German Joint Commission of Historians. 1996. A Conflictual Community, Catastrophe, Detente. An Outline the Portrayal of German-Czech History since 19th Century. Prague: Institute of International Relations.

The German Question was given a new dimension after the end of the Second World War by evicting a portion of big groups of ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe, deported and later systematically displaced on the basis of the Potsdam Treaty of the August 4, 1945. Planes of transfers were originated in May 1940 by group of academics in Chatham House/The Royal Institute of International Studies (Foreign Research and Press Service, Foreign Office) independently of the “expulsion” concepts of the Czech and Polish exile governments. In the opinion of the group no stable post-war solution was achievable without the transfer of several millions of Germans. This plan was resolution of disappointment arising from the failure of the inter-war minority policies of the League of Nations which worked-out framework of the protection of minority groups, among other Germans in Czechoslovakia, one of the largest group both in relative and absolute terms.⁴

The Implementation of the Transfer of German speaking population was made by the Czechoslovak Army. The Czechoslovak authorities, after consultation with the Allied occupation authorities, endeavoured to ensure that the necessary conditions for carrying out the transfer were created. From pre-war 3,7 mil. of German speaking population about 2,8 mil were deported to both the US and the Soviet sectors of occupied Germany.

By 1950, nearly fourteen million ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe had left their home, nearly two thirds had settled in the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany.⁵ **Millions of people experienced the traumatising process of economic, social and political uprootedness**, irrespective of the scope of individual guilt, caused by their coming to the environment of Germany devastated by military operations and occupied by victorious powers.

In spite of prior fears of the Allied bodies, which administered the occupied zones of Germany, **evictees had become a factor of the economic growth** and significantly con-

⁴ The Second World War brought the first great wave of violent migrations in the form of Nazi settlement plans leading up to consolidation of ethnic Germans in the so called “core territory”, including namely Western Poland, which was ethnically cleaned from all Polish inhabitants and inhabited by nearly a million ethnic Germans. Gradually, other plans to “strengthen German citizenship” started to be implemented in other occupied countries, including then the Protectorate Böhmen und Mähren (Czech lands). In 1941 ethnic Germans living in the territory of the Soviet Union were deported to Siberia and Central Asia and even after the war had ended, they were still denied the right to return to their country.

⁵ The limited capability (not in economic however in socio-psychological sense) of German society to cope with expatriation in the post-war era and again after the re-unification of both parts of Germany has given use to the possibility of a selective explanation of history to some of the evictees and their descendants. They exclude nearly all that preceded these deportations from the selective explanation of history.

tributed to the subsequent “Economic Miracle” of West Germany, underway at that time.⁶ This experience served as a catalyst or a **strongly motivating factor** for the systematic acquisition of a professional career (the willingness to work under a heavy workload) with a corresponding standard of living and social growth in particular.

The geopolitical reality of the ruling victorious powers facilitated the possibility “to cope with” the German question more easily, if for no other reason, than for its marginalisation within the fight for global ascendancy over and for the protection of the spheres of influence in the pending bipolar conflict between the East and the West.

Between the Past and the Future

After 1989 Czech-German relations were subjected to extensive debates on key events in their mutual relations in the period of modern history.

The ongoing debate took place in both specialised, scholarly circles and at a society-wide level. Reflections on these relations resulted in some social catharsis, but also provided proof that there still exist two perspectives and interpretations of their shared history — Czech and German (and Sudeten German in some cases) [Hahnová 1999]. As the dialogue and cooperation proceed, opinions in Czech society have also become differentiated and polarised over the course of the dialogue with Germany and in relation to the organisations representing transferred ethnic Germans.

There remains therefore the question of whether “coping with history” really has the purported positive and purgative effect it is meant to have in the case of cooperation between the Germans and the Czechs? When historical topics in the Polish-German relationship were instrumentalised it took relatively little time for them to seriously damage that relationship. For the same to occur in Czech-German relations would be highly undesirable.

The Czech-German Declaration-liberation from the past?

After 1989 latent historical *resentiments* showed a capacity for very rapid ethnic

⁶ Their common fate in expulsion from the East in the period of the Cold War generated interest in “Landsmannschaft” organisations/Landsmannschaften, the existence of which was supported by the Evictees Federal Act /Bundesvertriebenengesetz of 1953, imposing, in section 6 of the Act, a duty on the federal government to preserve the German cultural heritage of refugees and evictees. In compliance with the Act, each town, even a small town in the Federal Republic of Germany, with a ratio of inhabitants from ethnic Germans, was expected to have its “patron twin” in the East.

mobilisation, not just of Czech society on the whole, but also of a considerable portion of its elites. If a mobilisation with dynamics similar to what occurred during the pre-election campaign in 2002 were to repeat in the future, it could be a serious threat not only to the quality of the bilateral relations between the Czech Republic and Germany but also to cooperation within the European Union. The conflict-marked past of Czech-German co-existence, symbolised in the countries' distinct cultures of recollection and historical memory, remains latently present in the attitudes and behaviour of people on both the German and the Czech sides today.

Every retrospective discussion about values in history is simultaneously an attempt to reach a moral self-understanding with respect to the past. Does an understanding of the historical context mean the legitimisation of past actions? Is it all possible to generalise conclusions? The questions remain (Pauer: 1998).

The Czech foreign policy had to solve the problem of strains that accompanied Czech-German relations after 1989 connected mainly with the evicted German speaking citizens of the former Czechoslovakia. Then President Václav Havel offered in 1995 in his speech "Czechs and Germans are on the road to being good neighbours" on 17 February 1995 possible key formulation of past Czech-German relations. Including clear limits on the repeated revisionist and restorative demands from the Sudeten German side.⁷

New space for political manoeuvring was created. There was also clear will to negotiate and accept a Czech-German Declaration that will remove the burden of history with the help of compromise. Some German media and politicians (R. von Weizsäcker, R. Herzog, A. Vollmer, G. Verheugen, D. Genscher etc.) took up this cause, whether from personal motivations or purely from pragmatic- instrumental reasons (Kunštát: 1998).

There were **different interests of both sides** what topics should be include in the prepared text.

From the point of view of the Federal Government : The Czechoslovak-German Treaty, German assistance for the Czech application for EU membership, economic co-operation, collaboration in the United Nations etc.

⁷ There were also some next examples how to deal with history. For instance **the German-British Forum** settled down in 1995 partly as reaction to strains over German unification, the Gulf War, the single currency etc. Basic idea of Forum is: Germany and Britain the choice of becoming masters or victims of intensified international competition. Their chances of success will increase if they draw constructively on the wide economic, social and political networks between the two countries. The same guilts for Czech-German relation.⁷

From the Czech point of view, the most interesting and also most difficult passages were those which “analyse” the historical projections into the nature of current relations. As Havel’s speech the foreign minister of the FRG K. Kinkel cited the joint statement by Czech and German *bishops*. *They saw the reconciliation of the two nations as a primarily spiritual process* rather than a political one. However it was clear that political approach and decision are indispensable.

During discussions both in the FRG and Czechia, the main focus of interest was aimed on the historical section of the Declaration (articles 2 and 3), dealing with “**recognition of guilt**”. The German side, for the first time, officially recognised a casual connection between the events 1938/39 (destruction of Czechoslovakia) and 1945/46. This made it possible for the Czech side to undertake a relatively serious self-criticism on the question of expulsion and transfer of German speaking population. Nevertheless, the German negotiators did not succeed in obtaining a Czech recognition that the transfer of Czechoslovak Germans as such was illegal.

There were two reasons of this Czech attitude:

- 1) The post-war Czechoslovak and allied legislation stemming from the protocol of the Potsdam Conference (chapter XIII),
- 2) Public opinion of the Czech society towards the issue of transfer⁸ nevertheless, the German negotiators did not succeed in obtaining a Czech recognition that the transfer of Czechoslovak Germans as such was illegal.

When the Declaration after many delays was signed in Prague, there was relief on both sides.

The uncomfortable past is slowly diminishing with help of the Czech-German Declaration of 1997 signed after the extensive and sometimes emotionally sharp debate accompanying its birth. Historical memory and distinct ethnic identity/otherness continue to play the role of risk factors in Czech-German relations and the study of these phenomena warrants corresponding attention.

It is ultimately difficult for the partner on the other side to understand and anticipate his neighbour’s problems and the steps that could lead to solving them. Even after-declaration period appeared that is much easier to overcome gaps in factual knowledge

⁸ The Czech government had to reflect in her decision results of sociological polls made in the same time in the border areas (and similar results gained in the whole state polls) of the Czech Republic that appeared more or less $\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents justified post-war transfer of the Sudeten Germans. This crucial attitude changed longitudinal very slightly as direct implication of the deeply rooted collective memory.

(language skills, educational curricula and textbooks, etc.) than its socio-psychological barriers of an emotional tenor.

It is obvious that the polarisation of opinions is dependent not only on topic of ethnic Germans, but also on the course of the system transformation of Czech society. The factor of economic inequality between the two systems is approximately twice as important in the minds of Czechs as is the weight of historical memory of the conflict between Czechs and Germans in modern times.

Expectation for Germany

What is needed today, is a political culture adapted to the situation in which the Union is now operating. Where the old culture favored straight-line evolution, top-down harmonization, and a monopoly of policy ideas, the new political culture should support diversity and competition as organizing principles of the European polity (Majone 2007).

The gradual europeization of relations between Czechs and Germans involves civic and institutional cross-border cooperation. The effects of a divided Europe during the Cold War continue to make themselves evident to date in poorly developed contacts and ties between citizens on both sides of the Czech-German border in comparison with contacts within the Western Europe.

There are three factors, viewed from the sociological perspective, characterizing the attitude of Czech citizens when assessing the role of Germany expressing paralelly the awaitings towards neighbour country:

- Factor one—a forthcoming attitude of active cooperation
- Factor two—a rejecting attitude and vigilance
- Factor three—recognition of the importance of Germany and partial rejection of fatalism

The absolutely prevailing opinion of the local elites, in connection with the possibility of the further development of Czech—German cross-border cooperation, is that a greater amount of cooperation between entities on the Czech side of the border is necessary and desirable, i. e. between Czech municipalities, local entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations. Nearly one half of the respondents consider the cooperation between local partners to be highly desirable for the results of cross-border cooperation and a further 50 % of all respondents admit that it would be useful.

Particularly the first of the findings is valuable: the expectations of higher benefits from this kind of cooperation on the Czech side, in cross-border communities. We consider this question to be one of the principal prerequisites for the further dynamic development of “cross-border policy” at the local level.

On the whole, it is possible to claim that the Czech Republic's entry into the EU and its consequences for the further development of the border regions has met with predominantly positive appraisal and optimism on the part of the local elites. This optimism is necessary to correct the data taken from other research activities, which maintained that initiatives in establishing cross-border contacts were most frequently taken by the German party. Whether the reasons for the Czech passivity include a lack of acquaintance with the EU mechanisms, or a lack of financial funds, or language incompetence, it is desirable to bring to bear more assertively the needs and interests of Czech entities. This ascertainment of more-dimensional asymmetry will, only become valid at the time when however, become valid until the social capital and economic parameters have become equal on the Czech and German side of the border.

Final remarks

As time passes, even most painful chapters if „the common Czech-German“ cease to be part of real-life history, and gradually change into subject of research, open to a reflective analysis. Results of sociological polls of collective memory as well historiography dealing with „issues of guilty“ confirmed that any „break through“ from *circulus vitiosus* has its limits and is possible only by politicians. Unfortunately, they are often short of necessary courage.

Nevertheless still we should repeat next words: After the disastrous experiences of two World Wars, it seems almost miraculous that the states of the European Union now live in peace, freedom and prosperity.“ First of all, thanks to the process of European integration. Maybe this recognition contains main message to the Regional Studies Association for the Northeast Asia and in broader sense to the people of Japan.

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ⁱ.See, for example, the work of G. Marks in: Jeffery, C (ed.) (1997) *The Regional Dimension of the European Union. Towards a Third Level in Europe?*, London: Frank Cass.

ⁱⁱ Scholte, *ibid.* p. 47.